

Welcome to the C.N.A. E-Bulletin Vol. 3, No. 22 – April 6, 2007

An electronic publication of the Canadian Numismatic Association
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INTRODUCTION

Those who have seen my office over the years, know that I am probably not one of the neatest persons they know. According to "A Perfect Mess: The Hidden Benefits of Disorder" by Eric Abrahamson and David Freedman, "office messiness tends to increase sharply with increasing education, increasing salary, and increasing experience," according to InsideHigherEd.com.

Now, what I can't figure out, without increased education, definitely without increased salary and with very limited increased experience, how come I am so lucky as to be blessed with a messy office?

WE HAVE MAIL

I know we have mail, but we have put it off until the next issue.

2010 OLYMPIC COINS

In last Friday's issue, Nick Cowan asked the question: "Some of the recently issued Olympic coins are dated, 2008, 9 & 10. In the event of the death of Queen Elizabeth prior to January 1st of these years, what will happen to these coins? Will they become collector's items with a possible immediate and substantial increase in value, or would there be an attempted recall by the RCM (good luck on that one)? Do we have any historical experts out there who would care to comment on this? Also, your comments would be appreciated."

Alex Reeves, Manager of Communications at the Royal Canadian Mint, advises us as follows: "While considering this hypothetical scenario, one should note that Her Excellency, the Governor General in Council (meaning the Governor General of Canada acting on the advice of the Federal Cabinet) determines the designs of circulation coins, including the image which appears on the obverse. Though the Governor General In Council is not bound by statute to portray the effigy of the ruling sovereign on the obverse of Canada's circulation coinage, it is the effigy of the ruling sovereign which has traditionally appeared on our coinage, as is the case with many other member countries of the Queen's Realm. Under these circumstances, there would be no foreseeable reason for recalling Olympic coins still bearing the current effigy. The marketplace would surely dictate the value of these coins about which one can only theorize."

RCM LAUNCHES NEW CIRCULATING COIN

This past Monday, the Royal Canadian Mint released the second of 17 circulating coins to celebrate the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. Ice hockey, widely considered Canada's game, is depicted on the 25-cent coin. The coin features a hockey player in the centre, a stylized maple leaf and the words "Vancouver 2010." The obverse features the portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The coin entered circulation on April 3 in conjunction with the 2007 Women's World Hockey Championship being held in Winnipeg from April 3 to April 10.

Up to 22 million 25-cent ice hockey coins will enter into circulation. Participating Petro-Canada gas stations will also sell ice hockey sports cards, containing a uniquely painted version of the coin. The RCM also introduced a sterling silver collector version with a stunning hologram.

For the full story and illustrations, go to www.mint.ca or visit your local coin dealer.

On a personal note, I must congratulate the Royal Canadian Mint for helping promote the hobby of coin collecting in such a meaningful way. Over the next three years, they will put into circulation 17 coins featuring designs related to the 2010 Winter Games. People are sure to look at their change very closely and collect these special coins.

BANK OF CANADA WARNS OF SCAM

Peter Becker brought to my attention that the Bank of Canada's Website warns of an E-Mail scam.

The Bank has become aware of an e-mail scam that sends unsolicited e-mails that fraudulently identify the Bank of Canada as administering a program to bring foreign workers to Canada, for a fee of US\$300. So far, the scam is communicated in French only and names a member of the Bank's Board of Directors as the director of this fictitious program.

The Bank of Canada does not request personal or financial information through email and does not participate in any e-mail or Internet-based schemes that request payment for services.

For the full story and to find out how to protect yourself from fraudulent emails and websites, go to www.bankofcanada.ca.

CON EXPOSED BY JUDGE JOE BROWN

Tasha Williams was so sure the e-mail was legitimate that she responded. She also assumed that the letter and check she received was legitimate. She asked her friend to cash the winning check for her for \$2,700. Because of her friend's good credit, the bank paid out the cash before the check cleared.

The reason Tasha Williams wound up on Judge Joe Brown's TV show is that she felt that she should not have to repay her friend because, she says: "I won. My name is on the check and I won!"

Her e-mail address was selected from among 15 million in the International Mega Lotto. She did not accept Judge Joe Brown's comment that not everything you receive over the Internet is legitimate.

And you thought that everybody knows about the scams perpetrated on greedy victims over the Internet and that surely there is no money in it!

REDEEMING YOUR HALVES AND DOLLAR COINS

In a few previous issues, we heard from readers that they have had trouble using or cashing in at a financial institution, their half dollars and dollar coins. Alex Reeves from the Royal Canadian Mint writes:

"Depending on the coin, the reader may find it more beneficial to go to a coin dealer, rather than redeeming the coin at face value at a financial institution. Individuals can redeem nickel dollars and 50-cent pieces at a financial institution where they already have an account. The Royal Canadian Mint chairs the National Coin Committee, which is composed of Canada's major banks and armoured car companies. Under partnership arrangements at this level, there is an understanding that all financial institutions will redeem the public's coin - fit or unfit for circulation."

So if you have any problem getting your bank or trust company to accept your change, tell them about the National Coin Committee. Unfortunately, the teller will probably tell you they have never heard of them.

GUILTY PLEA IN ARCHIVES CASE

Associated Press reports that a former intern for the National Archives pleaded guilty to stealing 164 Civil War documents, including the War Department's announcement of Lincoln's death, and selling most of them on eBay. Denning McTague, 40, who worked for the National Archives and Records Administration in Philadelphia last summer as an unpaid intern, pleaded guilty to one federal count of stealing government property. The stolen documents were worth \$30,000, and all but three were recovered, prosecutors said.

\$17,000 FOUND IN SHUTTERED CASION

In Canada, we reach under the couch cushions and could easily find ten bucks in quarters, loonies and toonies. In the case of the former Sands Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City, the amount that had fallen under or around its slot machines over the past 26 years was a bit higher, according to Associated Press.

When the Sands was closed recently to make way for a \$1.5 billion gambling hall, workers began removing the 2,350 slot machines for use at other casinos owned by the Sands' parent company. They expected to find some stray cash, but just how much was a surprise: \$17,193.34. It included coins, casino tokens and even a \$100 bill.

Some of the money had rolled into tight spaces between the slot machines and even under the carpet, but most of it was found underneath the machines. Workers had made guesses about how much money would ultimately be recovered, but most were wildly short. New Jersey will get 8 percent in taxes, the same as any other money it gets from gamblers.

SACRED MONEY, DAMNED MONEY DISPLAY

From March 29 to October 14, the Currency Museum of the Bank of Canada, Ottawa, will present provocative objects from the Museum of Civilization's exciting exhibit "*Sacred Money, Damned Money.*"

The Currency Museum, located at 245 Sparks Street, Ottawa, ON, is open Tuesday to Saturday 10:30 am to 5 pm, Sunday, 1 pm to 5 pm and Mondays 10:30 am to 5 pm. There is no admission charge.

This remarkable exhibit will offer a new perspective on the coins and notes in your wallet, while providing a greater understanding of the Bank of Canada's role as the country's only note-issuing authority. Explore the sacred nature of money. Discover the value of money as a symbol of authority and power. Learn about the sacrilegious nature of counterfeiting and the artistic manipulation of money – as acts that deliberately defy money's authority and power.

For information on the Currency Museum, go to www.currencymuseum.ca.

THE LASQUETI MINT ISSUES COMMEMORATIVES

The Lasqueti Mint, located on a small off grid island in the Straight of Georgia on British Columbia's West coast, is issuing the second hand-made coin in the "Cascadia" series. Cascadia is the geopolitical bioregion that runs down the west coast of North America from Juno, Alaska to Santa Cruz, California. The coins are struck on 29.8 mm blanks containing half an ounce of .999 fine silver featuring a frosted obverse device of a "Western Tree Frog" perched

on a branch peering into a pond with a brilliant mirror field. The legend "Lasqueti" is above and the commemorative dual date "1997- 2007" is below. The reverse shows a frosted "Rufus Humming Bird" with the legend "Cascadia."

The issue is limited to 150 triple struck Proofs that come packaged in capsules with a wet signed numbered parchment certificate in an envelope. The first 150 frosted date double struck Brilliant Uncirculated pieces of open mintage reside in flips with numbered inserts. The remainder of the BU run will be issued in rolls of 10 each or in flips. The issue will be launched at the Vancouver Numismatic Society's spring show to run from March 31 to April 1. Issue price from the Mint for Proofs is C\$72.00 and for BUs C\$40.00 plus shipping. For more information contact Lasqueti Mint at lasquetimint@yahoo.ca or call 250 333-8868.

BEIJING UNVEILS 2008 OLYMPIC MEDALS

Gold and jade, which signify honor and virtue in Chinese culture, have been unveiled as the two key elements in the 2008 Beijing Olympic medals. The winning design for the gold medal centers on three components in a centre circle: The Beijing Olympic logo, the five Olympic rings and Beijing 2008." This inner circle is surrounded by a ring of jade with a gold-plated rim on the outside. The inlaid jade rings symbolize the traditional Chinese values of nobility and virtue.

The gold, silver and bronze medals will carry the same design, with a finer white jade in the gold medal, a slightly darker shade in the silver medal, and a green jade in the bronze medal. The flip side of the medal carries a design based on the roots of the Olympics in Greece. The medals were unveiled at a ceremony in the Capital Museum, welcomed by a shower of gold confetti, 500 days before the start of the games.

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Officials said 265 design proposals were received from inside China and worldwide, with a nine-member panel picking the winner. "The panel was looking for something that unmistakably was associated with China, and everyone agreed jade was that symbol," said Clinton Dines, a member of the panel.

All medals are size 70mm by 6mm and have a double dragon loop for ribbon to thread through.

BEST SHOW I EVER ATTENDED

A couple of weeks ago, C.N.A. E-Bulletin subscriber Dick Dunn, best known as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Canadian Paper Money Society and Bourse Chairman of both the 2006 and 2007 C.N.A. Conventions in Niagara Falls, Ontario, invited my wife and I to travel to Port Clinton, Ohio to attend MPCFest, the annual gathering of military paper money collectors. He and his wife had attended last year's show and enjoyed it immensely. Fred Schwan and his better half as well as a reasonably small committee put on this annual event which is now 8 years old.

Of all the shows that I have attended in my 50 years in the hobby and all the good things I could say about them, I have never enjoyed myself so much. You had to be there to understand my sheer delight of having attended, but I will try to convey some of the fantastic ideas that I was exposed to. Although what I experienced would be impossible to incorporate in future ANA and CNA Conventions, maybe other specialty shows will take another look at their program of events to see which ideas they might want to copy.

The first thing I noticed was there was no overlap of events for the collector, and not a single minute was free from 7:00 a.m. until midnight.

The breakfasts were not to be missed. That was mainly to the fact that show organizer Fred arranged for the hotel to give everyone a wake-up call at 7:00 a.m. that assured that you would not miss out on anything. I knew what was up as soon as the live hotel operator said: "This is the wake-up call you requested," even though I hadn't.

The first activity I had to attend, as a first timer following complimentary breakfast, was an army-style indoctrination, salutes and all, for first-time attendees, where I was given a pile of MPCFest "training notes" and a ration book. I was told that if I lost the book or did not bring it to a future MPCFest I attend, a donation of \$25 would be enforced "military style" for a replacement. The training notes were only given out to individuals the first time they attend and are different than at previous shows. Everyone wanted to trade their MPCFest notes for them...including an offer of \$5 each in "FDR" notes, which was my only exposure to anyone offering real U.S. dollars in exchange for my stack of MPCFest training notes. Had I sold them it would have paid for all my expenses to attend the show over four days. I also received a MPCFest bronze medal for attending.

The swap meet enabled everyone to exchange MPCFest notes they had received from this year's event or from previous years. It seems everyone had their favorite serial number, and since every note had a different serial number, it made for a good time trying to track down the notes you wanted. Not only did the notes have different serial numbers, but they came in various denominations (i.e. \$1, \$2, \$4, \$8, \$16, \$32 and \$48) some of these denominations were different than in other years because it was the 8th MPCFest. Last year, it was \$7, \$14 and \$28 MPCFest notes. To confound collectors, "mistakes" of all kinds could be found in the envelope of notes you were given for attending. For example, I obtained a \$1 note with serial number "00000001" that featured an asterisk on one side of the face, but not on the other side. Another note was a replacement asterisk note, while another was printed off-center. I know that I obtained notes with serial numbers collected by Wendell Wolka and Joe Boling that they will wish to trade with me next year.

Imagine if you had a Show and Tell session at your local club meeting and absolutely everyone participated. Well, that is exactly what happens at MPCFests where everyone speaks about Military Certificates or other military-related material. The fact that you were given a silver MPCFest medal as a reward might have something to do with the high participation. As well, a number of people displayed rare military paper money, covers, etc. The auction featured lots of scarce material. With low starting bids, I considered myself an "active" bidder although I only obtained a single lot of Japanese emergency money. A couple of lots sold in the thousands.

The small bourse offered military notes and a huge variety of previous year's MPCFest notes, some of which sell for hundreds of dollars due to the huge demand and the limited supply. Fred, who is both show organizer as well as the printer of the notes, purposely keeps them scarce and varied so as to keep the interest high.

The quiz, appropriately called "March Madness," was one of the best programs I have ever attended. Not only was it educational, but extremely funny. Two people at a time were asked questions and whoever rang the bell and answered two correctly first would move on to the next round. Everyone that participated received a silver MPCFest medal. I was knocked out in the first round. I did somewhat better at bowling, where I was not the worst. That dubious distinction belonged to my travel partner, Dick Dunn, who bowled...let's just say that he didn't beat my 127 in 10-pin bowling...and we even had the advantage of 9 pins being considered a strike (my motion of considering it a strike when you knocked down 5 pins was defeated by the sore winners).

Since the convention hotel, a Holiday Inn Express in Clinton, Ohio, did not have dining facilities, lunches and dinners were brought in. Chinese Food. Submarine Sandwiches. Assorted sandwiches. Pizza. More pizza and leftover submarines at midnight. I don't know how much weight I gained, because the scale broke when I stepped on it. As a first-timer, I was put on KP, but hardly earned my copper MPCFest medal because the hotel staff did all the cleaning up before I had a chance to do so.

A new book was unveiled, entitled "Silent Witnesses: Civilian Camp Money of World War II." Its authors, father and daughter team Steve Feller and Rachel "Ray" Feller (edited by Joe Boling), all very charming, were on hand to autograph copies. With 168 pages and 775 color illustrations, its price of \$35 (US) sounds like a bargain. I was fortunate to be able to bring back with me a box of autographed books which I will make available at the upcoming ONA Convention at original issue price. Incidentally, I won a printer's proof copy in black and white, a spiral bound proofreaders copy and a finished copy during one of the many free draws.

Poker Night also saw high participation, probably due to the fact that your buy-in was \$25 in MPCFest currency that you had obtained for free at the beginning of the show. There was one lady player last year that beat a whole roomful of guys to take away the grand prize of a \$7,000 military certificate printed up by Fred. The lady was Rachel "Ray" Feller. This year, she again was the only lady playing against a whole bunch of men, some who claimed to play poker somewhat regularly. She won again. I don't know what the certificates that she won are worth to MPCFesters, as they are called, but I would guess it can probably be sold for a few hundred dollars worth of FDR notes (that's the real money that is frowned upon by Festers, with the possible exception of the bourse dealers and the seller of the military certificate).

So let's see. Low hotel room pricing, free breakfasts, free lunches, free dinners, free midnight snacks, free draws, free individually printed MPCFest notes and Training notes, no registration fee, and free medals in silver, copper and bronze. I still haven't figured out where the money to pay the bills, including the convention space, comes from. Surely the donation auction couldn't possibly have made up for it.

I can't figured out what it was that made me conclude that it was the best show I ever attended, because there were so many things that individually would be rated tops: the March Madness quiz, the show and tell, the trading of those silly MPCFest notes that to anybody except MPCFesters would probably be considered worthless, the hotel staff and meals, the fun & fellowship. Any number of them would have made the 5-hour drive each way worthwhile. Never have I met such a group of friendly faces that came from all over to play with their MPCFest money and have lots of fun. They came from so many different States that I couldn't keep up writing them all down when everyone introduced themselves. Regular Wendall Wolka missed it this year, maybe because he is making plans for his impending wedding (congrats!). Other well-known "names" did make it, including Joe Boling, Neil Shafer, Ian Marshall (well-known paper money dealer from the Toronto area)...this bulletin might get a little long if I were to start naming the 60-plus "names" that showed up.

The ladies did their own thing most of the time. Even though Port Clinton is only a small dot on the map, they do have shopping malls and museums. But the ladies managed to be there for breakfasts, dinners and midnight snacks, again offered at no charge, and sit in on the final round of the March Madness quiz.

Although this was my first visit to the show, the old timers welcomed my wife and me as if we had attended the show before and knew everyone. No wonder my non-collecting wife is already talking about going back next year.

Every convention should be run like the MPCFest!

CANADA REVENUE BOSS TO QUIT

The head of the Canada Revenue Agency, Michel Dlorais, has told his staff he intends to resign his post in April.

Does that mean we won't have to submit payment of our taxes until a replacement is named?

WHY THE COIN BUSINESS IS BAD

January – people spent all their cash for the holidays.

February – all the best customers have gone South.

March – everybody's preoccupied with income taxes.

April – unseasonably cold, and people spent too much on Easter.

May – too much rain, customers don't want to come outside.

June – too little rain, farmers distressed.

July – heat has everyone down.

August – everybody away on vacation.

September – everybody back, broke.

October – customers waiting to see how Fall clearance sales turn out.

November – people saving their money to buy Christmas presents.

December – customers need their money for the holidays.

ONA CONVENTION NEWS

The Ontario Numismatic Association 45th ONA Convention, hosted by the London Numismatic Society, will be held at the Four Points Sheraton, 1150 Wellington Rd. S., London, Ontario, on April 20 to 22 (bourse open on Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. each day).

The 56-table bourse is sold out, and a record number of registration kits have been pre-sold. However, it is not too late to make a hotel reservation at 519-681-0680, ext. 8203

Meetings of the CTCCC, CPMS, CATC, CWMC, CNA Executive, ONA Executive and ONA Club Delegates are scheduled, as is a banquet, educational program and a hospitality suite. If you don't know what the initials stand for, either Google or go to www.canadian-numismatic.org and go to the links.

For full details on program of events, registration form, medal design and pricing, auction details, etc. go to www.ontario-numismatic.org/convention.htm or contact Tom Rogers at (519) 451-2316 or: trogers@sympatico.ca

ANA, ANS TO MERGE, ELECTIONS CANCELLED

Wayne Homren, editor of the E-Sylum, official publication of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society, advises in his recent e-bulletin that the ANA and ANS have decided to merge, move their head offices to Baltimore and merge both the print publications and websites. But the most startling news is that the ANA Board has decided to cancel elections and renew the contracts of the executive directors until 2012.

Boy, that's quite a coup for Wayne. I had heard nothing about it before. There is nothing in the latest ANA Numismatist. Not even the ANA Website mentions anything.

Then it hit me: the E-Sylum is dated April 1!

CONCLUSION

One of the changes I made above is that I left two lines between articles. This will make a new topic stand out from the normal single line between paragraphs.

Look for a special issue this coming Tuesday, most likely on Canadian lottery scams.

John Regitko
Your C.N.A. E-Bulletin Editor
Canadian Numismatic Association

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